Feb. 21,1967

Memo: to billings from chandler

Herewith two pickup photos of Arcacho- Smith plus CONFIDENTIAL report on conversation with R. Have unofficial okay (FROM R) to copy photos or part of photos and official arrangements on use, payment or credit wasnt discussed. Request soonest return of photos to me air mail special delivery.

Had lunch this afternoon with R and her husband at Emerald Door restaurant. She sez two nights ago she received call (+ LATER MET) man who identified himself and said her husband had once done him large favor. Informer said under no circumstances wants his name revealed and she didnt tell me.

Informant says in 1959 through 1961 he member of CAP group here a member of Marine Reserve unit based at Alvin Callendar Field (a Nav reserve air station in Plaquemines Parish 20 miles from New Orleans Informant is electronics technician who has several federal contracts Says in 1959 he, because of CAP connection and electronic training, approached by Ferrie, who he knew well, and Arcacho. They asked if he would help in training Anti-Castro guerillas being trained by Ferrie and Arcacho in an abandoned portion of Callendar with live amunition and M-1s and other military ordnance. Informant decli because of his government contracts but agreed to act as "repository information" for Ferrie and Arcacho in case they ever got into troubl and needed someone to testify to their activities. Because of that relationship he was kept well posted.

He says revolutionaries operated at field under guise of bei CAP group, which they werent. His Marine Reserve unit at one time was asked to help train this group and he personally observed Ferrie and Arcacho giving rifle training to group of 20 or so men. (more)

At the time Ferrie and Arcacho were also employed by u.s. immigration to be present anytime groups of Cuban refugees arrived in New Orleans and identify known communists. (FYI: R said States-Item reporter and (Time stringer) David Snyder asked Ferrie about working for immigration and Ferrie said no). However, says informant, every time refugee group was due to arrive, Arcacho would be jailed on pretext by New Orleans police and Ferrie would be jailed by Jefferson Parish police --where Ferrie resided then. They thus were prevented from identifying incoming Cubans. Inofrmant believes Orleans harassment directed by then district attorney RICHARD DOWLING and Jeff harassment directed by then Sheriff JACK FITZGERALD (FYI: both had strong Marcello ties).

Informant says Jefferson trial of Ferrie was a frame. Doesnt know why.

(In R's presence, informant phoned one JIM MARSH who also knows Ferrie and belonged his CAP group and Marsh claimed Ferrie had flown Oswald to Cuba in 1959 in a Stinson. (FYI: There is some rumor in town about Ferrie going to Cuba in a Stinson either alone or with other people). Gonzales and I were told this on visit to Westwego airport but couldnt get other details).

Informant also phoned one MIKE FINNEY who also CAP group member and informant asked Finney, "Dave (Ferrie) didnt know Oswald, did he ?" Finney replied, "Yes, sure. And so did I." Informant said these persons were among those being trained as revolutionaries:

? IVY RODRIGUEZ JR., who informant says very close to Arcacho and should have key information.

JOHNNY JOHNSTON (fonetic) now associated with Tulane university and close to Ferrie. Address is 1503 Thomas and fone 361-5363.

LAYTON MARTINS (Martenes ? fonetic).

(more)

1959-61

Informant says in this period Ferrie went to Guy Bannister to see if could get harassment stopped and Bannister showed Ferrie and informant letter from House Un-American etc saying then DA DOWLING was under investigation for Communist ties. On behalf of Ferrie, informant also talked to FBI locally in attempt to ease harassment and was referred to Washington. He was told by someone in Hoover's office: "You had better not get involved in this thing and tellyour friends they'll be better off out of New Orleans." He called Justice Department shortly thereafter and was told same thing in almost identical words. He had impression Justice Department had been briefed on him by the bureau. He took the advice and stopped all intimate association with Ferrie and doesnt know what happened to Ferrie, Acacho or Cubans thereafter.

Informant also said he was told in this period by Ferrie and Arcacho that the illegal Jefferson gambling casino BEVERLY CLUB was joinely owned by Marcello and Batista (whom he assumed to be the ex-dictator). Said he didnt know why Dowling and Fitzgerald were harassing F and A but felt either they had been bought off or were being used.

Informant believes ORLANDO PIEDRA of Miami knows details of Marcello-Batista-Beverly Club arrangement. Piedra, as you know, was former Batista police chief. He came to Orleans 1961 or thereabouts and bought house on lakefront. BILL STUCKEY did States-Item story on him at time showing documents pertaining to Raul and Fidel which Piedra had stolen.

(more)

R says person who can locate Piedra is DR. JORGE GARCIA MONTEZ, 520 Gerona, Coral Gables. Another of R's contacts says Garcia-Montez has information about Oswald heretofore unknown.

R says Acacho worked for both FULGENCIA BATISTA AND FIDEL CASTRO.

Other infos from R. Reily of Reily coffee company called employer of R's husband (both are members city crime commission) and said wanted to see urgently re: Garrison. R puzzled about why and I told her - don't know but maybe Reily just jittery since Oswald once worked for him.

--- ~~Another~~ anonymous caller told R that Garrison is seeking MANUEL QUESADA for questioning.

---R has been advised to contact ANDREAS PINEA (fonetic) patron of Los Americas bar here and former Batista policeman for info on Ferrie-Acacho, maybe Oswald.

--R and her husband both have suspicion electronics informant may be government agent (U.S. government).

---R says she told by Cuban woman here named CERNIGLIA that Garrison asked her for address of a Cuban priest named FATHER TESTES (fonetic) in Houston. Testes arriving Feb. 23 and is sked meet with Garrison.

R says she willing continue feed me information. What she and John Wilds want in return is my help see that States-Item not embarassedly scooped, particularly by local television. Said they understand my committment to Life but just dont want be locally embarassed. I told R I thought I could do that with understanding I must be protected and with proviso that AT ANY TIME I MIGHT BE CUT OFF FROM INFORMATION. They uninterested in getting specific leads from me and newspaper is quitting story until looks like Garrison doing something. (more)

This agreement was more implied than spelled out in words and, o course, leaves you and the magazine the option of cutting me off from information when and if it becomes necessary. R said she and Wilds originally intended give foregoing information to Garrison but his co duct changed their mind. It is my opinion that she and Wilds gave me the information so that later they will feel justified in asking me what I did with it and what their leads developed. I assume this is their motive since I cant see any other.

On another matter, CLAY SHAW's mother has a house in hammond. It is listed under the name G.L. SHAW.

P.S. PERSHING HAS BEEN IMPORTANT SOURCE FOR R AS, TO LESSER DEGREE, JUDGE FRANK SHEA.

—Chouder